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Workshop 5

Publicity and Public Relations

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Publicity and Public Relations

Abstract

This paper addresses approaches to using publicity and public relations to meet the goals of the NASA Space Grant College. Methods universities and colleges can use to publicize space activities are presented.

Introduction

The NASA Space Grant College program has specific goals to be accomplished. Publicity and public relations can make attainment of those goals possible. The goals are identified below.

Promote partnerships and cooperation among universities, government, and aerospace industries.

Promote strong science-math-technical educational base from kindergarten to university.

Encourage interdisciplinary training, research and public service programs to recruit and train professionals in the field of aerospace.

The workshop participants decided that to further the goals of the NASA Space Grant College, it would be best to define tools, approaches and relationships. Some pitfalls are also presented.

Tools

Tools are mechanisms that can be used to inform the specific audience of the purpose of the Space Grant College or what special events may be of interest to them.

Examples are:

Brochures

For industry

What research is on-going

What classes are available

What opportunities might be available for employees

For education

Fellowships available

Scholarships available

Press releases of specific events

Knickknacks
Paperweights, T-Shirts, Games, Pens, Decals, Nerf Balls

Presentation Materials
Video Tapes, Printed material

Newsletter

NASA Publications
Public Affairs
Public Education

Approaches

Approaches to be used to strengthen the public relations effort could include:

Electronic Mail such as Compu-Serve or others

A national board consisting of the program directors

College students participate in and/or judge high school science fairs

Presentation of the program to senior industry representatives

Presentation of the program to secondary education by undergraduate and graduate students

Meet with state legislatures

Develop a national Space Grant College library

Award scholarships to secondary students to Space Camps

Develop a LOGO that will identify the program

Use local educational television programs to inform the public of what is happening at the NASA Space Grant College

Utilize existing news bureaus

Link with other organizations, including underrepresented groups.

Encourage computer companies to develop software and games for the Space Grant Colleges to distribute to kindergarten through grade 12 students.

Relationships

Forming relationships with industry and the educational community is necessary. The following ideas were discussed.

With industry

- Named Fellowships

- National Space Grant College Board Membership

With other educational institutions

- Work with secondary education students and help the transition into college

- Give award letters to most promising students who participate in NASA Space Grant College events

Pitfalls

There are errors that can be made using publicity. Some of these are:

- Over publicize and generate too high expectations

- Incur high costs

- Over commitment

Summary

This summary of the workshop presents some ideas for using publicity and public relations to further the goals of the NASA Space Grant College. What is presented here is not exhaustive and some of these ideas may not work for your particular situation. When the next symposium is held, we will be able to report on how some of these ideas worked.